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HELPING OTHERS CATCH UP

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FEB 20 1969

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How Cooperative Extension

HELPS OTHERS CATCH UP

Extension workers are helping "the people left behind". They spend nearly half of their time working with the 15 percent of our citizens classified as "poor".

Many of this group feel that they have been bypassed by society. They have withdrawn, and view with suspicion any outsiders offering to help. These people require more time and individual attention than other groups of Extension clientele.

Today's Extension mission includes intensive programs to help people break the cycle of poverty wherever they live.

For youth, 4-H offers practical learning to supplement school work. Programs for low-income adults show how to make better use of such resources as donated foods, government assistance, and job training. These adults need special teaching materials that they can read and comprehend. Improvements in farming methods or home management must be within their financial range, coupled with assistance available from government or other agencies.

Results show that this strong Extension endeavor is paying off in better living now, higher hopes for the future. A few of the many examples of success are reported here.



Extension home economists are devoting nearly half of their time to programs directly benefitting low-income homemakers and their families.

Helping Others Catch Up... *--with* **Better Living**

Mothers and Children Learn Together

More confidence and a better self-image were extra dividends for a group of low-income women in Ottawa County, Michigan. The county Extension home economist taught a series of classes on such topics as "How to Live Better With What You Have", and "Three Square Meals a Day." A nurse taught family health to the mothers. Their pre-school children were next door in a child-care center run by volunteers. Next step was a family camp for the women and their children. While children learned camp crafts, mothers shared ideas and chores, learned personal grooming and how to understand their children. They're looking forward to jobs, more Extension-sponsored classes, and a better future.

Hope for Young Homemakers

Young Alabama homemakers and their families are living better on low incomes because Extension workers understand their problems and are helping to solve them. Program aides, trained to help with their special problems, have worked with several hundred of these families. Houses are cleaner now. The women are serving better balanced meals, and making better use of donated foods and food stamps. There is better understanding between mothers and their children, and increased pride in personal appearance. Families have been helped to increase their incomes with work done at home, and some have left the welfare rolls entirely.

Better Meals With a Spanish Accent

From their Extension home agent in Douglas, Arizona, nine young women took courses to help teach their Spanish-American neighbors. Four were volunteers and five were on half time pay. They learned new ideas for using donated foods, how to buy better at the grocery store, and what kinds of food are best for growing families. Since they spoke the language, they found doors opened graciously. Because of these lessons, families learned to like vegetables and got more vitamins in their meals. Others tried good new dishes using donated flour, dry milk, and yellow corn meal. They reported better health because of better food.

In its youth programs, Extension is working with 700,000 boys and girls from low-income families. A higher percentage of Extension time is devoted to these young people than to any other economic group.



Helping YOUNG AMERICANS

Migrants Join 4-H

The Racine County, Wisconsin, home agent adapted the 4-H program to serve children of migrant families. She held sewing classes for young girls, also found they were interested in food preparation. The girls learned basic food measuring and ways to improvise cooking equipment they did not have at home.

"City Kids" Visit Farms

Minnesota 4-H'ers share their farm life with disadvantaged youth from the Twin Cities each summer in an Extension backed people-to-people program. Teenagers from a settlement house enjoy corn on the cob, overnight visits with farm families, and most important, a chance to learn about farm activities. They tour several farms, get close-up views of livestock and farm machinery, try doing farm chores, and attend 4-H meetings. Both farm and city youth say the visits have extended their horizons and understanding.

4-H Sparks Adult Interest in Community

Community development programs succeeded in Dixon, New Mexico, when 4-H sparked adult interest. Family incomes were low in this region of small irrigated farms. The county Extension staff designated the Dixon area for a pilot project in concentrated 4-H Club work. The staff first chose projects related to local skills—kachina doll carving, lapidary, silver craft. Parents asked for home economics projects, after community fairs showed adults the new skills of the 4-H'ers. The program mushroomed until there were nine 4-H clubs.

After helping a family whose home had burned, 4-H'ers began to solicit pledges to buy a new fire truck. They succeeded, not only financially, but in helping unite adults in a common cause. The volunteer fire department helped prevent seven major fires. Adult leaders have picked other problems to attack—a telephone system, natural gas, improved roads. Community development is on the way, thanks to the 4-H wedge.

The Extension Service shows people how to develop the economic and human potential of their communities. It helps them first to understand the need, then make practical plans to solve their community problems. It also shows how to obtain the financial and technical assistance that is available from government and private sources.



Helping *Communities* Catch Up...

Jobs From Community Development

In five years, St. Clair County, Alabama, gained 1,750 more jobs because Extension workers helped local citizens organize an active community development program. The paychecks of St. Clair County citizens increased \$25 million a year, and capital investment in the county went up \$66 million. The program has brought to the county 15 industrial projects, new and improved public buildings and utilities, and 40 new recreation and tourist businesses.

Better Times for Hardburly

Hard times haunted the 400 citizens of Hardburly, Kentucky, after the coal veins played out. Most people left for other homes and jobs. Buildings decayed. But the Extension specialist in community development at the University of Kentucky saw hope for Hardburly. He helped local community leaders organize meetings, make plans, and persuade discouraged citizens to work as a group. With this guidance, the people of Hardburly put their own resources to work to change the community. They procured a good water system, a city dump, weekly garbage pickup, a new park. Money came from community events. The men, women, and youth of Hardburly did most of the work themselves. Now the Hardburly Association is planning development projects that will create more local jobs and business.

Group Action Brings Results

Unemployment has dropped from 20 to 8.5 percent in Livingston Parish, Louisiana, since the Livingston Redevelopment Association, Inc., was formed with Extension Service help in 1963. New industries and community facilities have come to this rural farming area because of the Association's program. It has a 55-bed hospital, a better water system, new natural gas systems, and a million-dollar sewer expansion. Five new plants employ 500 people. Voters have approved more taxes for new schools and a courthouse.

Extension helps low-income farmers learn better farming methods—and more. Agents are helping these farmers organize their own cooperatives and marketing associations. This puts each man in a better bargaining position when he sells what he has grown.



Helping Others Catch Up...

--on the FARM

Cucumbers for Cash

Cucumbers have paid off as a new midsummer cash crop for families on small farms in northeast Mississippi. In 1967, farmers planted a total of 407 acres of cucumbers and averaged \$248 per acre gross income. Most of them planted only one or two acres, and their families did most of the work. Extension agents held meetings to explain the program to farmers and helped them obtain contracts with processors. Then they showed the farmers how to seed, plant, fertilize, and harvest this new crop. Success has encouraged these farmers to plant more truck crops for cash income.

Feeder Pigs Bring More

Farmers in central Alabama are profiting from joining the Feeder Pig Association organized in that region. Extension workers from Auburn University saw the need for cooperative marketing and started action to get the Association organized among low-income farmers. Six Feeder Pig Associations in Alabama nearly doubled production to a total of 79,233 for an income of \$1,191,891, in 1967.

Good Advice -- Better Income

The North Dakota Extension Service assists young low-income farmers with budget planning as a way of analyzing and improving their farm businesses. The first 55 young farmers who took part increased their farm earnings by an average \$1,000 a year.

Beef Profits on a Reservation

Idaho Extension workers helped beef producers on the Fort Hall Indian Reservation increase the number and quality of their cattle. Thereby they increased profits. The number of cattle on the reservation was doubled in 10 years.



Americans with special needs get extra attention from Extension workers. Many are in the low-income group because of old age, low literacy, speaking a foreign language, retardation, or illness. Extension has programs to assist all of these people.



HELPING Americans

with SPECIAL NEEDS

Spanish-Americans Respond

Through the BRAVO community action program at El Paso, Texas, more than 6,000 families, mostly Spanish-American, have been helped to improve their nutrition, home management, sanitation, education, and other aspects of family life. Program aides trained by Extension reached more than 27,000 people in their 18,000 home visits. They say, "Families respond when you show them you really care and can help."

Happiness for the Elderly

Owners of a nursing home in Prentiss County, Mississippi, asked the Extension home economist to help find a worthwhile pastime for the residents. She devoted an hour and a half a week, to instruct them in arts and crafts. The elderly residents now take pride in giving others the objects they make.

4-H Helps the Handicapped

Seventy mentally handicapped children benefitted from training at Donovan School in Wisconsin. Leathercraft, clothing, nutrition, and knitting were taught by two adult 4-H leaders, three of the school's teachers and four students from the University Extension Center. At the final spring meeting, the children received achievement pins and chevrons. More important, they had a new feeling of accomplishment.

Reading Means Learning

About 8 percent of all Americans over 25 read at less than fifth grade level. Low literacy often means low income. The Federal and State Extension Services have printed millions of simplified booklets on home and family subjects. They help homemakers and wage earners understand information they need for better living and working.

Extension has good help in the big task of reaching less fortunate Americans. More than a million public-spirited volunteers help to relay Extension teaching in home economics and 4-H programs. And a growing number of paid program aides are working with low-income farmers, homemakers, and youth. These aides are usually chosen from among the poor. They understand the problems from their own experience, and they "speak the language" of the people they work with.



PROGRAM AIDES and VOLUNTEERS

Help Others Catch Up...

Operation Porkchop

In a Missouri Extension project, "leader aides" helped raise hopes and incomes of small farmers in Laclede County. They were hired and trained as aides in an 80-day course conducted by Extension experts. They learned about selecting stock, breeding, nutrition, disease control, and other phases of the feeder-pig business. Then each aide worked with 10 to 15 farmers, to teach them what he had learned. In the first year, 67 farmers in "Operation Porkchop" averaged \$341 each selling pigs. Because of their success in teaching, leader aides are now hired to carry "Operation Porkchop" to seven more Missouri counties.

Encouragement Spells Success

The world beyond the "City Dump" in industrial Cleveland, Tennessee, is opening up for low-income children. In an area where many families live on welfare and surplus commodities, better clothing was a must to maintain school-going self respect. The county home agent started by calling upon volunteer adult leaders and senior 4-H girls. They taught deprived girls how to use sewing machines and make clothing, and how to keep clothing clean and repaired. There were lessons on cooking from recipes, and craft classes for both boys and girls. Because of personal attention and encouragement from Extension volunteers, these deprived children have acquired a broader outlook on life, are aiming at higher goals for the future.

Program Aides Understand

Living is better when families learn to stretch limited incomes to get more of the things they need. In nine months, Texas Extension aides reached more than 53,000 people in 8,570 Tarrant County families with practical help on home problems. Forty aides in industrial arts and home-making were recruited from low-income neighborhoods and trained to teach adults and youth. They also learned to solve health and sanitation problems. Aides first made door-to-door visits to identify needs and to know the families. As homemakers began to trust the aides, they met in small groups of three to five. Soon aides were teaching up to 20 at once. A group of young mothers, ages 15 to 25, learned about prenatal and child care. Home sewing, low-cost recipes, and better nutrition were important subjects in most homes.

These are only a few of the many examples of Extension's work with low-income people in every state.

A People and a Spirit, the 1968 Report of the Joint Committee on Cooperative Extension, recommends that Extension should double its work in youth and family education, with emphasis on helping low-income people. It adds, "The concern of America today is focused upon its isolated, under-utilized people—its poor and alienated . . . Helping them is a long, hard, educational process that will take much understanding and a great deal of persistent individual effort."

